



210

JOURNAL PROMPTS

OR

DISCUSSION STARTERS



GRADES 4 - 7

created by an experienced
teacher/author

If you were the main character,
in a story you've read,
what would you have done
differently that would
have changed the plot?

If you could live anywhere in the
world, where would it be?

Who's your favorite relative?

If you could meet a character from
a story, who would it be?

If there was an emergency in your
home, what would you do first?

If you could meet a famous person,
who would it be?

Would you prefer to live in
a warm or cold climate?

What's your favorite food?

If you could live during a
certain time, would it be the past,
present or future?

What is the ideal pet?

If you were President of the United States, what changes would you make in the country?

If you had a choice of eating peas or asparagus, what would you choose?

Describe a time when you were brave.

If you could have dinner with a famous person, who would it be?

If you could be on a game show, what show would it be?

If you had a super power, what would it be?

If you could redecorate your bedroom, what would it be like?

What's the best piece of advice someone has given you?

What's the best time of day for you?

What's your favorite month?

What's your favorite activity?

If you weren't allowed to watch television, what would you do?

If your friends didn't invite you to go somewhere with them, what would you do?

If you could take three friends with you on vacation, who would it be?

If you were given one wish, what would it be?

If you were principal of your school, name one change you would make.

If someone made fun of you, what would you do?

What do you like the most about yourself?

What makes you feel safe?

What is a talent you have?

How would you feel if you did something wrong?

What kind of clothes do you like to wear?

If you saw a friend steal something, would you tell an adult?

What can be done to stop pollution?

If you were approached by a stranger, what would you do?

If you were lost in the woods, what would you do?

If there were no laws, what do you think would happen?

If a friend borrowed something from you and didn't return it, what would you do?

What's something that really bothers you?

What's the best gift you've ever given to someone?

If two friends invited you to
a party the same night,
what would you do?

What is the best memory you have
of kindergarten or first grade?

The qualities of a best friend are...

Would you like to be a leader
of a country or would you
rather be a
famous actor?

What would you do if you saw a
friend cheating on a test?

What's the funniest thing that ever
happened to you?

What would you do if you had
math problems marked
wrong on a test,
but they were right?

Who is your role model?

If you owned a store,
what kind would it be?

If you could declare a
new holiday, what would it be?

What is something that you treasure and keep hidden in your room?

Do you like your middle name?
If not, what would you change it to?

If you went camping, would you want to sleep in a tent or in a cabin?

What do you like to do when it rains?

What makes you feel special?

Would you rather wear shoes or go barefoot?

What is your favorite season?

What's your favorite time of year?

What's your favorite subject?

Describe a favorite toy you had when you were younger.

What's your favorite kind of weather?

If animals could talk, which animal would you talk with? What would you talk about?

What is something that disappointed you?

Describe a time when you were accused of something you didn't do.

What was an embarrassing moment for you?

Where do you prefer to do homework?

Would you rather go to the beach or to a museum?

If you were ten feet tall, how would your life be different?

What would you change about your town or city?

What kind of music do you like?

What are the qualities of a good teacher?

If you could change something about your neighborhood, what would it be?

What is something you'll never forget?

What would you do if you woke up in another country and no one understood the language you spoke?

How would you survive on a deserted island?

Summarize your day in twenty words or less.

Describe the characteristics of a hero.

Something I'd like to learn to do is...

Should kids get allowance money from their parents?

Should kids be required to do volunteer work?

If you were an inventor, what
would you invent?

What are you thankful for?

What's your favorite board game?

When you have a problem,
whom do you talk with?

Make a list of ten of the most
important things you've learned.

Why is exercise important?

What is the best field trip
you've ever taken?

Explain what you use the computer
for.

What do you worry about?

Have you ever flown on a jet or
ridden on a train? Where did you
go?

What's something you'd save money for?

What foreign language would you like to learn?

What advice would you give someone who will be in your grade next year?

What's the best movie you've ever seen?

What's the best way to learn about a new topic? Hands-on experiences or reading books?

If you were the coach of a team what advice would you give to your players?

What does the saying "Don't judge a book by its cover" mean?

If you could be an animal, which one would you choose to be?

What do you consider is a healthy lunch?

What's your favorite holiday?

Should the voting age
be lowered?

Should the driving age be lowered?

If you found a million dollars
in a parking lot what would
you do with it?

What's the best compliment you've
ever received?

Are rules important?

What's your favorite family
tradition?

Are older people, wiser than young
people?

Is it important to read?

Make a list of five things you
learned in the last two days.

Describe your sneakers.

What states have you traveled to?

Describe a perfect day.

Should people live on
other planets?

What's the best piece of advice
you've ever given to someone?

If you were given the choice of
reading a book or watching
television,
which would you choose?

What's the best form of
transportation?

If you could invite a
guest speaker to visit
your class, who would it be?

If you had the choice of going
to a zoo or to go sailing, which
would you choose?

If you were an author,
what kind of book
would you write?

Should a sports player make
more money than
the President of the United States?

Should kids be required to wear uniforms to school?

If you could change one thing about yourself, describe what it would be.

Should wild animals be kept in zoos?

Should children be allowed to drive ATV's?

Should students have to achieve high grades to be on sports teams?

Should there be stricter behavior rules in schools?

Should there be soda machines in schools?

Should guns be banned in the United States?

Should cell phones be allowed in schools?

Should fines for littering be increased?

If you could share one thing with your class, what would it be?

Should students have a say about what's served in the cafeteria?

If you could change the title of a book, what would it be called?

Would you like to live in a city or in the country when you are older?

If you saw a wounded wild animal, what would you do?

Should more American history be taught in schools?

If you could add a room to your school, what would it be?

What's your least favorite subject in school?

If you could change your classroom, what would you do?

What's your favorite flavor of ice cream?

Why is it important to be organized?

Is it important to ask for help when you don't understand something?

Why is it important to do homework?

Why is it important to clean out your book bag?

What's the hardest thing you've ever done?

Describe what you think a park ranger does.

Should there be school on Saturdays?

Should kids be allowed to have credit cards?

What character, in a book you've read, would you like to be friends with?

If you won an elephant as the prize of a contest you entered, how would your family react?

Who's your favorite author?

Do you like to work in
small or large groups in school?

If you have a choice of reading
fiction or nonfiction, what would
you read?

If you had a choice of riding
a bus to school or getting a ride
with a parent or friend,
which one would you pick?

Would you change the way
kids are graded in school?

Describe your room at home.

You've been asked to invite a
guest speaker to school.
Who would you invite?

What musical instrument do you
like best?

Make a list of
extra-curricular activities you do
during the week.

Why is it important to listen in
class?

If you could become invisible,
what would you do that you
normally can't do?

Which would you rather have,
power, wealth or fame or none of
them?

If you could make a
t.v commercial, what would
you like to advertise?

How do you feel on
the first day of school?

Why is it important to be honest?

Is it important for bicycle riders to
wear helmets?

Is it important to save money?

Explain how to play your favorite
game?

How would you make a
new student feel comfortable?

What does the expression
"the grass is always greener on the
other side" mean?

Is it important to cooperate?
Give an example
of cooperation.

Describe two things you think are
beautiful.

What would you do if someone
bullied you?

What would you rather do, ride a
bike or watch television?

What's the best birthday present
you've ever received?

What kind of award would you like
to be given?

If a friend told you he or
she was going to run away
from home, what would you do?

Name three rules you
have to follow at home.

What makes you sad?

What do you do to get exercise?

Would you rather go to the mall or go to a movie?

Would you rather climb a mountain or scuba dive?

What time of day do you like to do homework?

What's your favorite color?

Do you read the newspaper?
If so, what part or parts do you read?

Have you ever seen an eclipse?

Why is water important?

Who was the first President of the United States?

Who fought in the U.S Civil War and who won it?

Name the three countries on the North American continent.

What does the expression "I have a frog in my throat" mean?

What does a plant need to survive?

What does the expression "Money doesn't grow on trees" mean?

If you could be a different height, what would it be?

If you could add a room to your home, what would it be?

Why is it important to be polite?

Name an African country.

Name a European country.

Name an Asian country.

Name a South American country.

Who is the nicest person
you know?

If you could give away
something of yours, what
would it be?

What's the most important
thing you could teach a
three year old?

Should the school day be
shorter or longer?

Should there be more P.E
classes in school?

Have you ever ridden a horse?

Would you rather live in a desert
or in a rain forest?

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Why is math important?

If you were the main character, in a story you've read, what would you have done differently?
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If you could take three friends with you on vacation, who would it be?
If you were given one wish, what would it be?
If you were principal of your school, what would you do?
If someone made fun of you, what would you do?
What do you like most about yourself?
What makes you feel safe?
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What would you do if you had math problems marked wrong, but they were right?

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What would you do if you woke up in another country and no one understood the language you spoke?
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Summarize your day in twenty words or less.
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What are you thankful for?
What's your favorite board game?
When you have a problem, whom do you talk with?
Make a list of ten of the most important things you've learned.
Why is exercise important?
What is the best field trip you've taken?
Explain what you use the computer for.
What do you worry about?
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If you were given the choice of reading a book or watching television, which would you choose?

What's the best form of transportation?

If you could invite a guest speaker to speak to your class, who would it be?

Would you rather go to a zoo or go sailing?

If you were an author, what kind of book would you write?

Should a sports player make more money than the President of the United States?

Should kids be required to wear uniforms to school?

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Why is it important to be organized?

Is it important to ask for help when you don't understand something?

Why is it important to do homework?

Why is it important to clean out your book bag?

What's the hardest thing you've ever done?

Describe what a park ranger does.

Should there be school on Saturdays?

Should kids be allowed to have credit cards?

What character, in a book you've read, would you like to be friends with?

If you won an elephant as the prize of a contest you entered, how would your family react?

Who's your favorite author?

Do you like to work in small or large groups in school?

Who's your favorite author?

If you have a choice of reading fiction or nonfiction, what would you read?

If you had a choice of riding a bus to school or getting a ride with a parent or friend, which one would you pick?

Would you change the way kids are graded in school?

Describe your room at home.

You've been asked to invite a guest speaker to school. Who would you invite?

What musical instrument do you like best?

Make a list of extra-curricular activities you do during the week.

Why is it important to listen in class?

If you could become invisible, what would you do that you normally couldn't do?

Which would you rather have, power, wealth or fame or none of them?

If you could make a t.v commercial, what would you like to advertise?

How do you feel on the first day of school?

Why is it important to be honest?

Is it important for bicycle riders to wear helmets?

Is it important to save money?

Explain how to play your favorite game?

How would you make a new student feel comfortable?

What does the expression "the grass is always greener on the other side" mean?

Is it important to cooperate? Give an example of cooperation.

Describe two things you think are beautiful.

What would you do if someone bullied you?

What would you rather do, ride a bike or watch television?
What's the best birthday present you've ever gotten?
What kind of award would you like to be given?
If a friend told you he or she was going to run away from home, what would you do?
Name three rules you have to follow at home.
What makes you sad?
What do you do to get exercise?
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Would you rather climb a mountain or scuba dive?
What time of day do you like to do homework?
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Who fought in the U.S Civil War and who won it?
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What does the expression "I have a frog in my throat" mean?
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What does the expression "Money doesn't grow on trees" mean?
If you could be a different height, what would it be?
If you could add a room to your home, what would it be?
Why is it important to be polite?
Name an African country.
Name an Asian country.
Name a European country.
Name a South American country.
Who is the nicest person you know?
If you could give away something of yours, what would it be?
What's the most important thing you could teach a three year old?
Should the school day be shorter or longer?
Should there be more P.E classes in school?
Have you ever ridden a horse?
Would you rather live in a desert or in a rain forest?
Do you know how to swim?
Can you count to 100 by 5's?
Why is math important?

Suggestions

Small groups

Small groups of four - Give the four students different prompts (laminated cards). Set a time limit of one minute to respond to the prompts. After a minute is up, they have to rotate the cards. After they've each answered all cards, have them share their answers.

oral discussion

As a filler at the end of a class, have a student pull card a from a "PromptJar" (large wide mouth jar) and read it to the class. Have volunteers respond to the prompt. These should be laminated for future use.

journal entry

Have copies of the cards available (not laminated) and distribute a card or cards to students. They paste them in their daily journals and respond to them.

Brainstorm

These topics are only a portion of my complete list. I ask my students to brainstorm for topics they'd like to add to my list. There have been times when I've also asked them to rate the topics I give them.

Ex: Have them write 1,2,3 or 4 stars in the daily journal near the

Thank you for downloading my free 210 Journal Prompts!

My TeachersPayTeachers store is: <http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Ruth-S>

Take a look at a few of my best selling products.

<http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/NOVEL-RESPONSE-CARDS> This is one of my most popular products.

Teachers tell me how valuable these cards are! There are 60 activities, 5 per card that can be used with any novel. They can be laminated and used in small, large groups, with guided reading groups, literature circles and at literacy centers. Some include art activities, writing letters, sequel, adding new characters to novels, changing the setting, determining the author's purpose and more. For grades 3 and up.

<http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/IDIOMS-ARE-FUN-PACKET> Have a frog in your throat? So many idioms are unfamiliar to kids these days. Teaching idioms is fun! These cut out idiom cards can be used for a variety of activities. A written activity requires your students to decide which sentences illustrate the idioms. Create a bulletin board with pictures students draw of their literal meanings.. Have them work in small groups, to write stories using idioms with dialogue. Great for ESL students!

[FAIRY TALES WORKSHEETS PACKET - Ruth S. - TeachersPayTeachers.com](#) Fairy tales are fun! This 13 page packet explores the elements of fairy tales. Students rewrite traditional fairy tales as modern ones, (Fairy Tale Makeovers) write an interview with a fairy tale character, and retell one from another character's point of view. Another worksheet centers around the protagonist, antagonist. This is one of my favorite units! Just imagine Cinderella's glass slipper is a sneaker and she arrives to the ball in a limo!

[Poetry Activity Cards - Ruth S. - TeachersPayTeachers.com](#) These 27 Poetry Activity Cards can be used to create poetry packets or as classroom activities. Each card has a definition and example of a particular poem. Included are traditional types of poems such as couplets, cinquains, odes and more. Humorous and serious poems are included. These cards will even motivate those students who say they don't like poetry, to join in the fun! This is also a time to blend poetry with art. Have your students select the poems they'd like to illustrate, then display them around the room. Suggestions are given of how to use these cards and how to develop a poetry packet that's a great family keepsake! Laminate and cut out for future use.

[SIMILES METAPHORS AND MORE PACKET - Ruth S. - TeachersPayTeachers.com](#) Do you want your students to be more effective readers and writers? These worksheets will give your students a better understanding of figurative language. Worksheets include: alliteration, similes, metaphors, oxymoron, personification and onomatopoeia. The activities are generic and can be used with all novels and as reinforcement during writing lessons.

[Bloom Ball Reports - Ruth S. - TeachersPayTeachers.com](#) A Bloom Ball report is based on Bloom's Taxonomy that encourages higher level thinking. Your students will have fun as they work together to write, draw, cut out and glue the edges of the circles together when they're finished creating their reports. Included in this 17 page packet are: templates in color and black and white, teacher and student instructions, templates in two different sizes, and more. When the balls are completed, they are colorful, interesting projects to hang around the classroom. This packet has instructions for a fiction book report and a bio book ball that students create about themselves.

[CHOCOLATE FEVER by Robert Kimmel Smith - Ruth S. - TeachersPayTeachers.com](#)

Children have fun completing these worksheets designed for Robert Kimmel Smith's book, Chocolate Fever. Best for small groups so children can work collaboratively on plot, setting and character activities as well as others such as writing chocolate couplets, predictions, summaries, reactions, chocolate math, creating a story board, drawing activities, response to text, 5 W's, a chapter sheet that can be used as a trifold for display and much more. Instructions of how to use the sheets are included as well as websites. These can be used during and while reading the book.

[Grammar Assessment - Ruth S. - TeachersPayTeachers.com](#)

Need a quick grammar assessment to see how much your students have retained? Use this grammar assessment as a diagnostic or end of the year assessment, as a teaching tool or practice for mandatory state tests. Included are: Nouns, verbs and verb tenses, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, synonyms, antonyms, plural and singular nouns, alphabetical order, pronouns, prefixes, contractions, syllables, types of sentences (exclamatory, declarative, interrogative, imperative), punctuation, subjects, predicates, context clues, prepositions, direct objects, complete or incomplete sentences, capitalization, editing and revising sentences. There are 35 questions with some having multiple examples to answer. Answers are included.

[HOLES by Louis Sachar Student Worksheets - Ruth S. - TeachersPayTeachers.com](#)

Are you searching for activities that fit your students' needs and cover all the essential elements of a novel? Do you have reluctant readers who need something different that will make them want to read more? Your students will unravel the mystery of Camp Green Lake and determine how the past is connected to the present by using my 38 worksheets that include: plot, setting, characters, cause and effect, predicting, themes, main ideas, summarizing, discussion questions for each chapter, symbols, choices (extension activities), connections, opinions, figurative language, rising, falling actions, climax, and more. MANY teaching ideas are given for each page, as well as pages that have detailed instructions, answers and information about the story. There are comprehension questions that can be used for guided reading groups or literature circles.